



Dorchester County First Steps Partnership

Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Report

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Total children in county under age 6
10,443

Total Children in county living in
poverty %: 12.1%

Dorchester County Highlights

- “I have received my Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education” states a DCFS program participant.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

I am pleased to present the Dorchester County First Steps (DCFS) Annual Report for 2008/2009 – a year of continued growth and achievement for DCFS as we strengthen our support for children, families and the community. DCFS fostered partnerships with Trident Technical College, Trident United Way, Dorchester County School Districts Two and Four, Nurse Family Partnership and other agencies. Through partnerships, DCFS will assist other agencies in the development of programs that prepare young children in Dorchester County for school.

Evaluating the effectiveness of our programs keeps us abreast of the latest research to ensure that DCFS uses best practices for all of our programs. We continue to recruit childcare providers, teachers and parents for monthly workshops through our Child Care Professional Development and Training program.

During the year, DCFS was invited by both Charleston and Berkeley First Steps to implement the Nurse Family Partnership Program. Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation awarded funding for this program for three years.

The DCFS Board continues to assist with the ongoing recruitment of board members. We applaud board members for their unwavering support of the First Steps mission. We will continue our success in making sure that Dorchester County’s children reach school “ready to learn”.

Respectfully submitted,
Vanessa White Goodwin, Executive Director

First Steps to School Readiness Strategy Areas

The First Steps initiative approaches children's school readiness needs in five ways:

Family Strengthening: A parent is a child's first and best teacher. First Steps works to help parents become the best parents they can be. First Steps also helps parents further their own education.

Healthy Start: Children's development and ability to learn are profoundly impacted by their health in the earliest years. First Steps works to help families understand children's health needs through education and screenings while also working to help them access needed health services.

Quality Child Care: Quality child care provides immediate and long-term learning benefits for children. First Steps works to expand the availability of quality child-care to families and to enhance the level of quality in existing child-care environments.

Early Education: Research shows that children who participate in high-quality preschool classes are more likely to start school ready to learn, as well as be more successful later in life. First Steps works to expand high-quality 3-year-old and 4-year-old kindergarten opportunities in public and private settings.

School Transition: The transition into kindergarten is a critical time that sets the tone for children's perspectives about the school years, as well their parents' perspectives. Making a strong initial connection between school and home -- and supporting both parents and students during this transition time -- has been shown to impact students' later school success and parents' later involvement during the school years.

2008-09 County Partnership Programs by Strategy

FAMILY STRENGTHENING

PARENT CHILD HOME & PARENTS AS TEACHERS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: DCFS partnered with Dorchester School Districts Two and Four to administer the Parent as Teachers and Parent-Child Home programs. These programs strengthen and increase the capacity of parents to be their child's best and most important teacher. The Parents as Teachers (PAT) program is a early education program that provides parents with child development knowledge and parenting support. PAT offers regularly scheduled monthly home visits by certified parent educator who provide timely information on each child's development and respond to parents' questions and concerns.

The Parent Child Home Program (PCH) is a research-based and research-validated early childhood literacy and school readiness program. The Program successfully strengthens families and prepares children for academic success through intensive home visiting. The program's theory is that cognitive, and social emotional growth results from the exchange of conceptually rich language between the parent and child stimulated by curriculum materials, books and toys that remain permanently with the families.

PROGRAM RESULTS:

- 61 Children were directly impacted by the visitation services of PAT and/or PCH
- Group meetings were offered monthly for parents and children
- 40 children were enrolled in Dolly Parton Imaginations Library Program
- 954 successful Parenting home visits were conducted by parent educators

EARLY EDUCATION

FULL DAY 4-K PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: DCFS partnered with Dorchester School Districts Two and Four to expand early education services to four-year-olds by offering high quality, full and extended day 4-K to children with indicators that are statistically proven to predict low success in school.

PROGRAM RESULTS:

- 40 children successfully completed the school year

CHILD CARE TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Parenting with all Teachers for Success (PATS) is a successfully best practice forum that provides staff training, mentoring and guidance for child care centers to achieve higher levels of quality. In addition, this program helps childcare providers, parents and teachers meet their annual DSS continuing education requirements. PATS forum topics varied monthly to include: Playground Safety, Childhood Games, Teach Me to Read, Let's Get Cooking, Stress Management, Blood Borne Pathogens, Let's Get Together for a Meeting, Balancing Family & Work, and The Importance of Childcare Accreditation. In addition to these free workshops, Dorchester County First Steps partners with Trident Technical College to provide college courses locally; this allows students to work toward an Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education.

PROGRAM RESULTS:

- Offered 16 Certified Workshops
- Trained 754 child care providers, parents and teachers (total includes participants from each class)
- Due to the high demand of new employees in the childcare industry and an overwhelming response, these workshops were offered twice: *Playground Safety* ~89 participants, *Childhood Games* ~108 participants, *Teach Me to Read* ~ 83 participants and *Lets Get Cooking* was offered three times~124 participants.

DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Introducing a child to reading can be an enjoyable process. Studies have shown that children react and associate sounds with emotions. By demonstrating how to use a book effectively, children will learn how to associate pictures with the words. The Dolly Parton Imagination Library program was implemented to support early literacy experiences of young children.

PROGRAM RESULTS:

- 495 children are currently enrolled in program
- 495 children are receiving developmental appropriate books in their home monthly

SCHOOL TRANSITION

COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a school transition program designed to successfully bridge at-risk students into the K-12 school environment. Its objective is to prepare rising kindergartens for 1st graders and improve parental interaction and involvement. The program has three components: home visitation, learning celebration, and public awareness.

PROGRAM RESULTS:

- 49 children 6 visits from a trained teacher
- 9 of these children received visits from their assigned 5K teacher
- Dorchester County exceeded the state average for change at 35%. The County Partnership concludes that our retention of teachers, communication from the CP and their dedication to the clients has allowed the CP to maintain a high average for “change”
- Retention of 5K teachers in the program to provide home visits to children and their families since the inception of the program.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

<u>Expenditures By Funding Source</u>	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$ 308,945
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$ 32,745
Lottery Appropriation (<i>Fund 35</i>)	\$
C.D.E.P.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 60</i>)	\$
C.O.E. Appropriation (<i>Fund 65</i>)	\$
N.F.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 70</i>)	\$
State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>)	\$ 7,376
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$ 17,559
Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>)	\$
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$ 108,844
TOTAL:	\$475,469

<u>Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name</u>	
Childcare Training & Professional Development	\$25,852
Extended 4-K	\$43,242
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$12,949
Parents As Teacher/Parent Child Home ~ 2	\$ 39,500
Parents As Teachers/Parent Child Home ~ 4	\$ 39,500
Full Day 4-K	\$61,580
Imagination Library	\$8,343
EIA	\$ 24,096
PRIVATE ~ Local	\$4,623
PRIVATE~ State	\$2,605
INKIND	\$106,344
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$ 39,078
Administrative Functions	\$26,347
TOTAL: \$434,059	

NOTABLE DONORS

<i>DONOR'S NAME</i>	AMOUNT
Private Donor	\$ 200.00
TOTAL: \$ 200.00	

Local Match Percentage for FY 2009: 15%

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

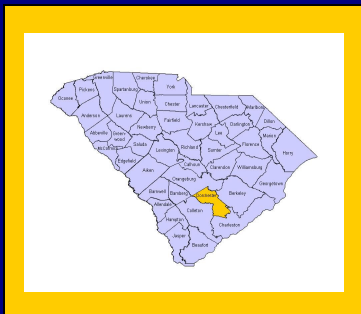
Ms. Wanda Brown, Dorchester County Library
 Ms. Elaine Bryant, Early Childhood Education
 Ms. Mary Davies, Early Childhood Education
 Ms. Teresa Frasier, Non-Profit Organization
 Ms. Susan Gadson, Dorchester School District Two
 Ms. Elaine Glover, Business Community Chair
 Ms. Yvonne Greatheart, Mandated Agency Representative, DSS
 Ms. Flossie Grundy, Early Childhood Education
 Ms. Betty Harrison, Head Start
 Ms. Ethel Harrison, Non-Profit Organization
 Ms. Karen Hill, Mandated Agency Representative, DHEC
 Mr. John Pence, Legislative Delegation
 Ms. Carrie Simpson, Childcare and Early Childhood Development

COUNTY DATA SNAPSHOT

In FY09, First Steps County Partnerships statewide made it a priority to become increasingly data-driven. County Partnerships successfully began using powerful new components of the First Steps data system, and County Partnerships also utilized data in new ways to drive their FY09 program plans. In addition to enhanced program data tracking, County Partnerships are also focusing on the best available data about children and families to best understand their communities' needs. At the end of FY08 and the beginning of FY09, County Partnerships began an extensive analysis of this data, including data about the risk factors known to impact children's potential school success, such as low birth weight, teen mothers, and families living in poverty. A county-level risk data report is included in the subsequent pages of this report.

Your 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile will be inserted by OFS after this section. For your reference, a PDF of this risk profile was sent to you along with your Annual Report Template

The SC General Assembly created in 1999 the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Initiative as a "comprehensive, results-oriented initiative for improving early childhood development by providing, through county partnerships, public and private funds and support for high quality early childhood development and education services for children by providing support for their families' efforts toward enabling their children to reach school ready to learn"...here's what happened next:



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile Dorchester County

Total Children Under Six: 9,015

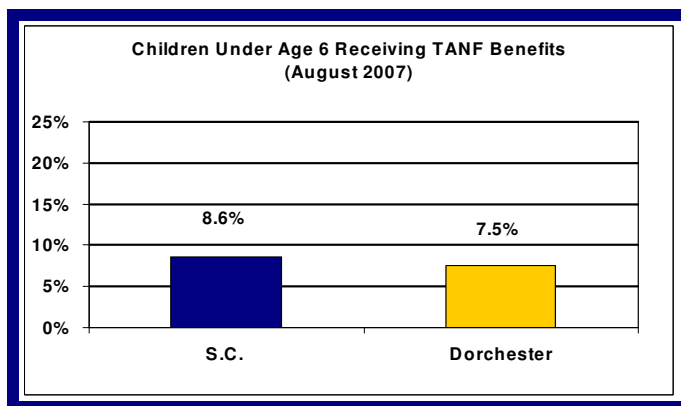
CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%

Dorchester County (2007): 7.5%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 13 Dorchester County children has an annual family income equivalent to \$10,325 (or less) for a family of four. A recent statewide analysis suggests that 45% of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Children in deep poverty often face a wide variety of school readiness obstacles, ranging from inadequate prenatal care and nutrition to low maternal education.
- 673 of Dorchester County’s 9,015 children under age 6 received federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits during 2007, indicating a family income at or below 50% of the federal poverty definition.



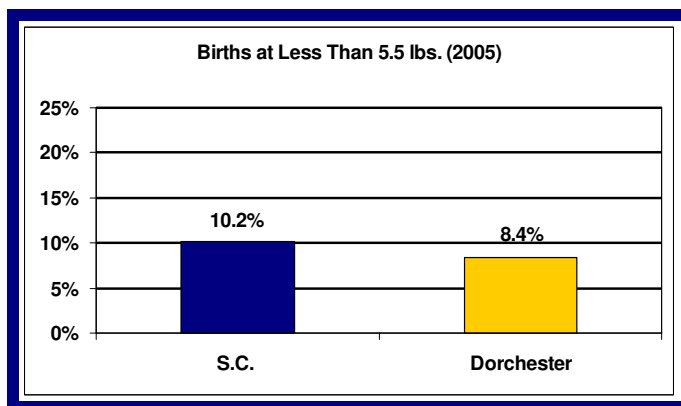
CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

Dorchester County (2005): 8.4%

Fast Fact: 1 in 12 Dorchester County children is born at a weight less than 5.5 lbs. A recent statewide analysis suggests that at least one-third of these children (36%-52% depending on weight category) will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Babies born at low weights are often prone to developmental delays associated with early academic failure.
- Many have received inadequate prenatal care and suffer from significant health complications.
- 132 of the 1,565 children born in Dorchester County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



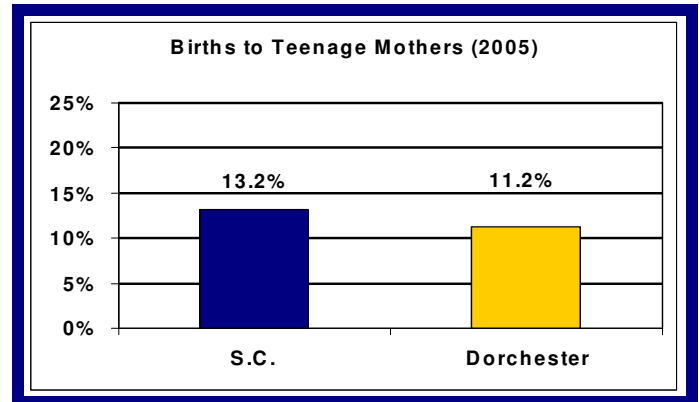
BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

Dorchester County (2005): 11.2%

Fast Fact: Just over 1 in 10 Dorchester County births is to a mother under 20 years of age. A recent statewide analysis suggests that 43% of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Teenage parents often lack the maturity and knowledge required to optimally fulfill important parental responsibilities, are less likely to advance their own educational attainment and often fail to advance beyond low-income status.
- 176 of the 1,565 children born in Dorchester County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



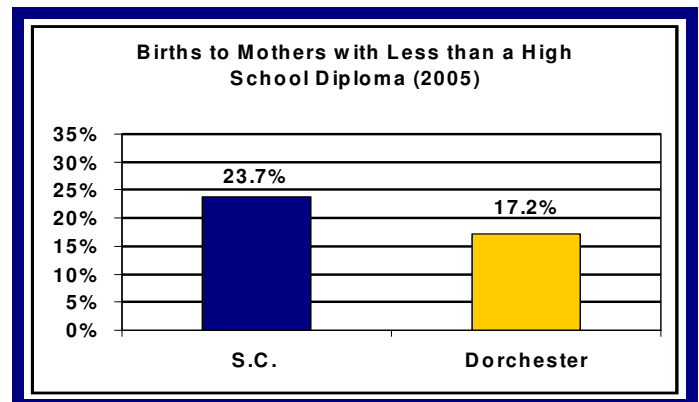
BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%

Dorchester County (2005): 17.2%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 6 children in Dorchester County is born to a mother possessing less than a high school diploma. A recent statewide analysis suggests that roughly half (48%) of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Research suggests that a mother’s own educational attainment is closely linked to the subsequent academic performance of her children.
- 269 of the 1,565 children born in Dorchester County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.



All data provided by the SC Budget and Control Board’s Office of Research and Statistics